

Message Text

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20

ACTION AF-06

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O R 280645Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8357

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

UNCLAS DAR ES SALAAM 1745

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (SMUTH, HUNTER)

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPED AMERICANS: TANZANIAN EDITORIAL

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 1733

1. GOVERNMENT-OWNED TANZANIA DAILY NEWS MAY 28 RAN FOLLOWING
EDITORIAL:

2. QUOTE. ON MONDAY, MAY 19, A GANG OF ARMED MEN ABDUCTED
FOUR FOREIGN STUDENTS, THREE AMERICAN AND ONE DUTCH, ON A
GAME RESEARCH STATION IN KIGOMA REGION, WESTERN TANZANIA.

THE ABDUCTORS' NATIONALITY WAS INITIALLY NOT CLEARLY
KNOWN, BUT IT HAS SINCE BEEN ESTABLISHED THEY ARE NOT
TANZANIAN. IN FACT, AFTER THE RAID, THE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN
TAKEN OUT OF TANZANIA.

ONE OF THE CAPTIVES WHO HAS SINCE BEEN RELEASED AND
ARRIVED IN DAR ES SALAAM, HAS BROUGHT TO THE TANZANIA
GOVERNMENT RANSOM CLAIMS MADE BY THE GANG.

THESE DEMANDS INCLUDED THE RELEASE OF WHAT THE GANG
CALLED THEIR PEOPLE IN DETENTION IN TANZANIA, CASH PAYMENTS
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AMOUNTING TO NEARLY FOUR MILLION SHILLINGS, AND A DEMAND FOR

THE GANG TO BE PROVIDED WITH ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

THE TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT ON MONDAY TOTALLY REJECTED THE DEMANDS OF THE GANG, BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT FINDS IT TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO RELEASE PEOPLE ON THE RANSOM BASIS.

AND TO underscore THIS POINT, SOME OF THE MEN NAMED IN THE RANSOM NOTE, WHO HAD BEEN HELD FOR SOME OTHER REASONS AND HAD SINCE BEEN RELEASED, WERE RE-ARRESTED AND DETAINED, LEST THEIR RELEASE BE MISCONSTRUED TO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT ABOUT AS A RESULT OF THE RANSOM PRESSURE.

ANY OTHERS, CONNECTED WITH THIS GANG AND STILL AT LARGE IN THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE VIGOROUSLY PURSUED AND BE TAKEN IN THE SAME MANNER.

BUT SINCE THE GOVERNMENT'S REJECTION OF THE ABDUCTORS' RANSOM DEMANDS, THERE HAVE BEEN INUENDOES IN AMBASSADORIAL STATEMENTS MADE IN DAR ES SALAAM, THAT THE GOVERNMENTS WHOSE NATIONALS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED ARE WORKING WITH TANZANIA TO SECURE THEIR RELEASE.

INDEED, ON THIS PAGE WE PUBLISH A PRESS STATEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN EMBASSY WHICH BOLDLY ASSERTS THAT THE "PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY" OF SECURING THE SAFE RETURN OF THE ABDUCTED STUDENTS RESTS WITH THE "HOST GOVERNMENT", IN THIS CASE TANZANIA.

WE WANT ALL THOSE CONCERNED IN THIS MATTER TO GET US VERY CLEARLY. FROM THE HUMANITARIAN POINT OF VIEW, WE ARE NATURALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ABDUCTION AND THE FATE OF THE STUDENTS. WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE THEM RELEASED.

BUT WE CATEGORICALLY REJECT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR RELEASE OR WHATEVER HAPPENS TO THEM. WE WOULD FURTHER LIKE ALL CONCERNED TO ACCEPT THIS UNAMBIGUOUS STATEMENT AS OUR FIRM POSITION.

THE ABDUCTORS WERE NOT TANZANIAN. THEIR NATIONALITY IS KNOWN AND THEIR HIDEOUT IS BEYOND OUR BORDERS. FOR ANY-ONE TO LAY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RELEASE OR OTHERWISE ON TANZANIA IS TO STRETCH THE IMAGINATION TOO FAR. IT IS SOMETHING WHOSE MEANING OR MOTIVES WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND.

BUT MAYBE WE SHOULD POSE THE QUESTION: HAD THE ABDUCTED STUDENTS BEEN TANZANIAN, WOULD ANY FOREIGN GOVERNMENT HAVE ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY TO SECURE THEM FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT? UNQUOTE.

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3. PAPER ALSO CARRIES FRONT-PAGE NEWS ITEM AADED "FREE KIDNAPPED STUDENTS - US", WITH TEXT OF U.S. STATEMENT RELEASED MAY 27 (REFTEL), AND BACKGROUND RECAP REITERATING TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT DECLARATION THAT IT "WILL NOT YIELD TO THE THREE-POINT RANSOM NOTE GIVEN BY THE KIDNAPPERS..." ARTICLE NOTES ARRIVAL MRS. SMUTS AND EXPECTED ARRIVAL OF OTHER PARENTS.

4. TANU-SWAHILI-LANGUAGE DAILY UHURU ALSO HAS FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE AND COMPARABLE EDITORIAL ON KIDNAPPING. TRANSLATIONS FOLLOW SEPTEL.

5. COMMENT ALSO FOLLOWS SEPTEL.

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